

INFORMATION REPORT
CONFIDENTIAL

COUNTRY Czechoslovakia

SUBJECT Ball Bearing Production at Perstejn

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

1. Czechoslovakia started to produce ball bearings in 1946 in the former Swedish SKF factory in Perstejn (NSI/K81). When this plant was confiscated in 1945, the Swedes removed all machinery of Swedish origin for the manufacture of steel balls and bearings. Only obsolete and worn German tools and machines were left in the plant when the Czechs took it over.

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2. In 1947 the Perstejn factory became plant 28 SKF, Perstejn, of the Zbrojovka Brno national enterprise. The old machinery has been shipped to another plant of Zbrojovka Brno in Tyniste (050/L36), where ball bearings are also manufactured. Production at the Tyniste plant is slow because of the lack of machinery.

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3. A third plant in Lisen near Brno is being equipped for the production of ball bearings. It has not yet been decided whether the plant will be used to produce only certain parts of bearings to supplement the production at Perstejn or actually to manufacture steel balls.* A factory for the production of ball bearings is also being built in Spisska Nova Ves (R49/D87). Of the total production of ball bearings in Czechoslovakia, 80 percent is manufactured in Perstejn and Zbrojovka, 12 percent in Lisen and 2 percent in Tyniste.**

4. The Perstejn plant consists of old buildings set in the valley of the Ohre River about ten minutes walking distance from the Perstejn railroad station. The factory produces its own electricity and furnishes power to the surrounding villages when the plant is not in operation. The power plant consists of two Captain water-powered turbines; when the water level is too low, steam-driven generators produce the power.

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5. On the average 550 employees work at the plant, between 350 and 400 actually on the production of ball bearings. Most of these are unskilled laborers, and only in the machine shops and in leading positions are experts and skilled

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laborers employed. Because they are on a piece-work basis, the workers rush the work with the result that they turn out poor parts. The average worker earns 6,000 kcs per month; those in the machine shops earn as much as 10,000 kcs per month. Morale is low because of constant increase in production norms and consequent lower wages.

6. Daily output is 3,000 ball bearings. Production could be increased by 70 percent if a steady supply of the necessary raw materials and a sufficient number of expert technicians were assured. About one-third of the finished bearings are defective. Operations in the grinding shop are especially faulty. Leaders at the plant are trying to keep this fact from the public and inspectors have been ordered to pass as many pieces as possible so that the production plan can be fulfilled. Falsified production records have been submitted to show that the plant was meeting its quota.

7. The Perstejn factory produces the following types of ball bearings:

6200 to 6209	6301 to 6309	1206 to 1212
1306 to 1312	6000x to 6007x	

In addition, the plant produces entire groups of bearings of types 38 and 39, which are either stamped or dropped. Various types of bearings, including one and two row axle bearings and bearings for farm equipment, are being produced in light and heavy models. On 1 January 1950 production of roller bearings 6008x to 6016x and 6018x was to have begun. It is believed, however, that production will be delayed for four to five months beyond the scheduled date because neither sketches of tools nor detailed production plans have yet been made.

8. Ninety-nine percent of the finished products are delivered to Czech national enterprises. No deliveries are made to private firms. Complaints from customers are common. The Svit Works in Batovany returned half of one shipment because the ball bearings were rusty.

9.

Steel

for the manufacture of other tools and of the ball bearings themselves comes from the Poldina Hut Works at Chomarov (N51/F02). Poldina Hut delivers the following types of steel: Poldi Radeko, Poldi Maximum and Poldi Ezi. Deliveries have been irregular and incomplete. Therefore, in recent months the steel needed for the manufacture of tools has been gleaned from scrap piles.

10. The most acute shortage is of steel rods for the manufacture of the rings for ball bearings. Rods from Poldina Hut are often bent and twisted. Straightening these rods takes about 1½ hours apiece, and between one-third and one-half of the rods must be discarded.

11. Steel from Poldina Hut for the manufacture of tools is also inferior since the steel plant lacks the necessary vanadium, molybdenum, tungsten and titanium. The United States is the only source of these raw materials since the USSR does not export them. Steel bearing the trade-mark Poldi Radeko should contain 0.5 percent vanadium; however, it is being manufactured completely lacking in this element.

12. Personnel at the Perstejn plant includes:

Supervisor of laboratories and
steel tempering:

Ing. C. Suchanek

Construction supervisor:

Stepnicka

Lathe foreman:

Ferdinand Meiss

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Automatic lathe foreman:	Sramek
Planning officers:	Ing. Jancik Hucek
Plant foreman:	Hanus
Draftsman:	Dvorak
Chief of the sales department:	Ludmila Patkova
Chief of the personnel department:	Pich
Gatekeeper:	Ruzicka

Most of the employees at the plant are anti-Communist.

13. The Perstejn factory uses the Göteborg system of production, which permits it to produce bearings at one-third to one-quarter the price of a plant which does not use this system. The Göteborg system consists of passing inner and outer bearing rings through a series of tolerance controls and grading them according to their deviation from exact measurement. By combining an oversize and an undersize ring, bearings of proper dimensions can be obtained and fewer pieces rejected.

25X1 * Comment: Manufacture of steel balls at this plant is impractical because of the lack of raw materials and of the required special machinery.

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